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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/937,220	09/24/2001	Akihiro Goto	Q65416	6650

7590

10/20/2005

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EXAMINER

EVANS, GEOFFREY S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1725

DATE MAILED: 10/20/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/937,220

Applicant(s)

GOTO ET AL.

Examiner

Geoffrey S. Evans

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 August 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1,3 of U.S. Patent No.

6,501,232. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably

distinct from each other. Regarding claim 1 of the instant application, claim 1 of U.S.

Patent No. 6,501,232 recites a control means that is the same as a control unit that sets

first and second pulse widths with peak values ($1 \leq k \leq n$), which includes the instant

recitation in claim 1 of ($2 \leq k \leq n$). Claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,501,232 also discloses

emission of the electrode material can be suppressed and controlling the predetermined

values based on a predetermined processing condition (the predetermined melting

temperature of the hard coat). Regarding claim 2 of the instant application, claim 3 of

U.S. Patent No. 6,501,232 discloses a method of electric discharge surface treatment

for forming a hard coat on a surface of a workpiece, the method comprising the steps of

generating (dividing) a pulse current having a first and second pulse widths with first

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and second peak values, and a n-th pulse width with an n-th peak value ($1 \leq k \leq n$) (which includes the instant recitation in claim 2 of ($2 \leq k \leq n$) and controlling the emission of the electrode material based on a predetermined processing condition (the predetermined melting condition of the hard coat).

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Magara et al. in U.S. Patent No. 5,434,380. Magara et al. in U.S. Patent No. 5,434,380 discloses a control member (see element 21 in figure 9 for controlling the electric discharge unit (element 10) ; see column 7, lines 52-56) for supplying pulses to the gap (see figure 6) with a first pulse width section and first peak value section and also a second pulse width section and a second peak value section (see figure 16(b)) that meets the equation ($2 \leq k \leq n$) by satisfying the equation $2 = k = n$. Since during the first pulse width section less emission of the electrode occurs, inherently this can be considered to suppress the emission of the electrode material. It is also inherent in an electric discharge process that a diameter can of an electric discharge arc column is extended.

5. Applicant's arguments filed 2 August 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. No terminal disclaimer has been received with the response of 2

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August 2005. Regarding the rejection based upon Magara et al. in U.S. Patent No. 5,434,380, the term "hard" is a relative term. The "hardness of the coating" depends upon the material used as the electrode (which is not being claimed) rather than the power supply used for the electric discharge surface treatment.

6. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

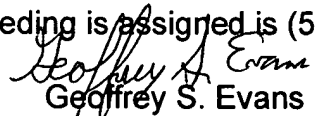
7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Futamura et al. in Japan Patent No. 1-295,714 discloses a discharge channel that increases in size over time (see figure 3).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Geoffrey S Evans whose telephone number is (571)-272-1174. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 6:30AM to 4:00 PM, alternate Fridays off.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tom Dunn can be reached on (571)-272-1171. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571)-273-8300.

GSE


Geoffrey S. Evans
Primary Examiner
Group 1700